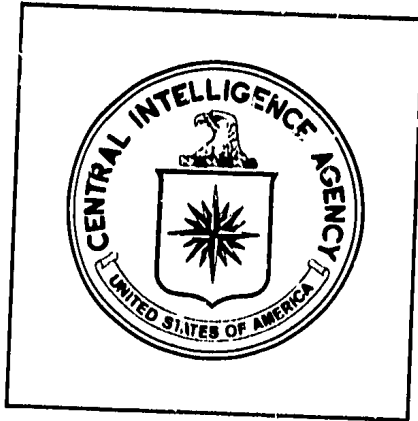


Approved For Release ,25X1  
2008/02/07 :  
CIA-RDP86T00608R00040002

Approved For Release  
2008/02/07 :  
CIA-RDP86T00608R00040002

**Secret**



# STAFF NOTES:

## Middle East Africa South Asia

State Dept. review  
completed

**Secret**

134  
No. 0445/75  
March 17, 1975

**Page Denied**

**SECRET**

**MIDDLE EAST - AFRICA - SOUTH ASIA**

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

**CONTENTS**

**Somalia: Siad's Outlook and Policies. . . . .1**

25X1

**Seychelles-UK: Constitutional  
Conference Underway in London. . . . .5**

**SECRET**

SECRET

Somalia

*Siad's Outlook and Policies*

President Siad has consolidated his position since coming to power following a coup in October 1969 and now appears to be playing an almost exclusive role in governing Somalia, according to a recent assessment by the US embassy in Mogadiscio.

Having shared power for several years with military associates on the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC), Siad has lately concentrated on building up his personal power and prestige. The Somali leader, around whom a "cult of personality" seems to be developing, appears to be increasingly reluctant to tolerate views contrary to his own. Highly suspicious of the motives of others, Siad is prepared to take stern measures to safeguard his newly consolidated position.

In recent months, the Somali leader also has moved more rapidly to curb the power of his SRC colleagues. His restructuring of the government last December isolated most SRC members from real power and policy making positions and relegated them to advisory roles. To prevent civilians in the cabinet from posing a political challenge, Siad has made certain that the ministers' chief function is to implement his policies.

Siad also recognizes the need to control the Somali military, the regime's maintstay. He has sought to keep the military happy with enough food, good living conditions, a role in local administration, and a continuous supply of modern weapons. The president has also sought to focus the military's attention on external causes, such as regaining Somali inhabited areas in Ethiopia, Kenya, and the French Territory of Afars and Issas.

Nevertheless, Siad remains apprehensive about a possible challenge from the military. He reportedly allows only two army regiments--those said to be controlled by his fellow tribesmen--to have live ammunition. He has also removed from the top posts

(Continued)

Mar 17, 1975

1

SECRET

SECRET

many military officers with strong tribal ties and has replaced them with weaker personalities.

As a possible counter to the military and to further solidify his hold, Siad has been toying with the idea of creating a mass political organization. It is unlikely that he would permit it to become anything other than an extension of his personal power. Siad is convinced of the correctness of his efforts to modernize Somalia and carry out government programs. He appears to be disgusted with the disarray that characterize the predecessor civilian regime and is convinced that the Somali people must be controlled for their own benefit.

Siad has sought to diminish the influence of the conservative Muslim religious leaders of Somalia. In late January, he moved swiftly to crush criticism from the religious establishment of his social reforms. This move appears at least temporarily to have cost him some support among Somalis whose ties to Islam have remained strong.

In economic matters, Siad displays a genuine distaste for what he considers the indiscipline and corruption of capitalism, and equates it with the exploitation and injustices he saw during the long period of Somalia's colonial domination. He has adopted his own brand of "scientific socialism" as the means of controlling the national economy. The embassy contends, however, that he is guided more by pragmatic consideration than ideology.

Siad reportedly no longer sees the US as a threat to his regime, but he believes he can use the US for his own purposes. He would welcome US economic aid and appears willing to make some concessions for it. He recently revoked the Somali registration of ships that had been trading with North Vietnam, long an official obstacle to a resumption of US aid. The US embassy believes that Siad might make further attempts to accommodate the US by toning down anti-US propaganda. Nevertheless, the embassy warns that Siad will continue to view the US with suspicion and that no fundamental change of direction by Siad should be anticipated.

(Continued)

Mar 17, 1975

2

SECRET

According to the embassy, Siad considers himself secure enough to risk the displeasure of the Soviets, his regime's major external prop and benefactor. Siad, who reportedly distrusts all foreigners, tries to exploit the Soviets while seeking to restrict their influence in Somalia. The president's ability to control Soviet influence is complicated by Somalia's dependence on Moscow for weapons, ammunition, and fuel.

Siad has permitted Moscow to establish a variety of military facilities at Berbera and elsewhere in the country. In the US embassy's view, the situation is unlikely to change unless Siad comes to believe that the large Soviet presence in Somalia, which includes advisers down to the company level in the army, poses a threat to his position.

25X1

Mar 17, 1975

3

SECRET

**Page Denied**



SECRET

Seychelles-UK*Constitutional Conference Underway in London*

British representatives and leaders of the Seychelles islands, a British colony in the Indian Ocean, began two weeks of independence talks on March 14. The UK is expected to grant independence sometime between March and May 1976, if several problems can be worked out.

The islands' chief minister James Mancham and Albert Rene, leader of the opposition Seychelles Peoples United Party (SPUP), are heading the Seychelles delegation. One troublesome issue to be resolved is the SPUP's threat to bolt the London talks unless the UK agrees to hold a new legislative election under rules favorable to the party prior to independence. The SPUP points to the disparity between its popular vote tally of 48 percent in the last election in April 1974 and the two seats it secured in the 15-member legislature. Understandably, Mancham's Seychelles Democratic Party, the victor in the election, is adamantly opposed to a new election.

Rene has also undertaken a vigorous propaganda campaign over the last several months demanding the return to the Seychelles of three island groups--Aldebra, Desroches, and Farquhar--detached in 1965 to become part of the British Indian Ocean Territory, which also includes Diego Garcia. As a result, Chief Minister Mancham has been forced into asserting the Seychelles' rights to these islands. Although basically flexible on this question, Mancham does not want Rene to make political capital from a popular issue.

The UK has not yet worked out its future defense relationship with an independent Seychelles. London may press for a provision in the independence agreement that will preclude the Seychelles from granting base rights to any nation unless the UK approves.

(Continued)

Mar 17, 1975

5

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

Chief Minister Mancham is due to meet with US officials in Washington on May 4 and 5. He has indicated that he would like to discuss, among other matters, the status of the "British Indian Ocean Territory and Indian Ocean questions," US naval visits to Seychelles, and the rent Seychelles will receive from the US Air Force tracking station on the main island.

25X1

25X1

Mar 17, 1975

6

~~SECRET~~